

## RAVAGES OF THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

The following is issued by the Bureau of Census, Washington, U. S. A.:—

The influenza epidemic has thus far taken a much heavier toll of American life than has the great war. The total loss of life throughout the country is not known, but the Bureau of Census has been publishing, for 46 large cities having a combined population estimated at 23,000,000, weekly reports showing the mortality from influenza and pneumonia. These reports, which cover the period from September 8 to November 9, inclusive, show a total of 82,306 deaths from these causes. It is estimated that during a similar period of time the normal number of deaths due to influenza and pneumonia in the same cities would be about 4,000, leaving approximately 78,000 as the number properly chargeable to the epidemic.

The total casualties in the American Expeditionary Forces have recently been unofficially estimated at 100,000. On the basis of the number thus far reported, it may be assumed that the deaths from all causes, including disease and accidents, are probably less than 45 per cent. and may not be more than 40 per cent. of the total casualties. On this assumption, the loss of life in the American Expeditionary Forces to date is about 40,000 or 45,000.

Thus, in 46 American cities having a combined population of only a little more than one-fifth the total for the country, the mortality resulting from the influenza epidemic during the nine-weeks' period ended November 9 was nearly double than in the American Expeditionary Forces from the time the first contingent landed in France until the cessation of hostilities.

For the 46 cities taken as a group, the epidemic reached its height during the two weeks ended October 26, for which period 40,782 deaths were reported—19,938 for the week ended October 19, and 20,844 for the following week. Since October 26, however, the decline has been pronounced. During the week ended November 2, 14,857 deaths occurred and during the following week only 7,798. The only city in which the number of deaths reported for the week ended November 9 exceeded the number occurring during the previous week was Spokane, Washington.

In general, the epidemic traversed the country from east to west. In a number of eastern cities—notably Boston, where the greatest mortality occurred during the week ended October 5—the largest numbers of deaths were reported for earlier periods than that which covered the height of the epidemic for the 46 cities taken as a group. On the